

3/15/09

Honorable Montana State Representatives
Attention: Judiciary Committee

My name is W.J. McKey, and I reside in Glacier County, Montana. My work is related to teaching and preserving ancient, indigenous technology. Study of history and heritage is a lifelong interest and necessary part of my work.

This correspondence is in direct OPPOSITION TO Senate Bill 221 as written, amended, and proposed.

1. Montana already has adequate laws to cover every circumstance concerning every degree of cruelty to animals without infringement on a very responsible public trying to do right things, BY, FOR, and WITH their animals. If punitives are not adequate enough to deter abusive activities against animals, then strengthen them; but do so without making criminals of a very responsible public.
2. Regardless of political affiliation, decision making committee members were not sent to Helena to make criminals of very responsible and productive people or people who allegedly have some sort of psychological affliction or disability....which is exactly what Senate Bill 221 does.
3. There is no mental diagnosis in existence for Animal Hoarding; therefore, there is no treatment.
4. It is clear that the drafters and "pushers" of SB221 lack a great deal of information related to a very healthy and productive agricultural industry and have resorted to innuendo, based on emotion to irresponsibly trample on the guaranteed rights of Montana citizens. Without understanding an individual's very responsible breeding program, NO form of legislation can dictate the number of animals, or numbers of support animals, needed to guarantee the success of the program. There are small family operations as successful as larger operations.
5. SB221 is very vague. It is an open-ended, back door regulatory process that prohibits citizens the right to enjoyment of private property without due process. Further, it is unclear who provides the psychiatric services. Perhaps it should be the person responsible for the fee. There are too many "gray areas" that allow *perception management* and *special interests* to arbitrarily interpret (i.e. "the number 10") and impose undue regulations and penalties however to whomever.
6. The term companion animal applied to livestock of all types, including horses, is a misleading, misconstrued concept derived with adverse intent. The American Quarter Horse Association (only one of many), and internationally accepted organization and the largest of its kind, defines "horses" as livestock, a terminology describing horses since mankind's first introduction to them across the world for thousands of years.
7. After thorough review and considering the content of SB221, it is not worthy of approval depicting infringement toward a freedom loving public.
8. There remains a very simple and fair solution to SB221. There are many in every county of Montana who would volunteer their time, energy and expense to assist

and investigate alleged animal cruelty situations in Montana. Should a request by the State arise...I personally remain among them. Infractions would be reported to the highest elected official...your County Sheriff...by Constitutional decree, as he/she is *the* "closest elected official to the People", and still remains so. Our county prosecutors are very capable of enforcing laws already in place against animal cruelty infractions and have proven so. Adoption of this type procedure would save Montana a lot of tax dollars, involve a very responsible public, and guarantee strengths provided under the U.S. Constitution, Montana State Constitution, and Bill of Rights.

I respectfully request your opposition to SB221.

Respectfully,

W.J. McKey

Closing Statement: SB221

We did, in numbers, honor our representatives' request through electoral process to serve "We, the People" in Helena....to protect our interests, our well-being, our BACKS, while "We, The People" labor at economic tasks that pay the taxes to assure your own positions prevail. We did not, however, honor these requests to guarantee social standing, economic security, or political gain. These are bonus gifts earned by long term trust...a trust gained by performance...by READING Bills such as SB221 thoroughly, dissecting, analyzing, and discussing them within committee and making decisions with great and responsible reserve. Decisions that adversely affect so many lives command a respectful degree of common sense not included in SB221.

Early Montanans suffered, they gave their lives to work and live as free people. As a hodge-podge of nationalities with similar desires they came; they fought all odds, and they prevailed. They remain today a respectful, responsible people of Montana steeped in heroic history with the same undaunted desires as ancestors who came before them. Let's not forget that agriculture, including livestock, is what brought so many here to work and settle and continue to do so. They will fight against tyrannical ideology such as SB221 represents...diplomatically in the Legislature, forcefully in the Courts, and campaign or stand toe to toe on a ground of their choosing.

I respectfully request the rejection of SB221.

Respectfully,

W.J. McKey